Australian Bureau of Statistics

Census
100 years 1911–2011
9 August 2011

EDUCATION SERVICES UNIT
Activity: 7.1 Advanced

Name: _____

Date: _____

Census 2011

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is responsible for developing and administering Australia's Census of Population and Housing. This activity will help you understand the processes of a Census by matching frequently asked questions with their answers.

1 List 3 or 4 questions that you think people might want to know about the Census. Also think about who might ask these questions.

- .....
- .....
- .....
- .....

2 Compare your responses with someone else in your class. Write down a question that was different to yours.

.....

.....

3 Discuss with your class what questions other students had.

4 Look at the questions listed in the table on Page 2 and:

a Place a tick next to any that are the same as ones raised by your class.

b Put a number next to each question according to the order that you think the information would be presented.

c Share your answers with the rest of the class and try to arrange them in an order that all of the class agrees to.

5 On pages 2, 3 and 4 there are answers to the questions shown in the table. Cut the statements out and match them to the correct question.
Note: definitions of words in bold in the statements appear in the glossary.

6 **Extension**: prepare a one minute talk for the class explaining why all people in Australia on Census night need to fill in a Census form.

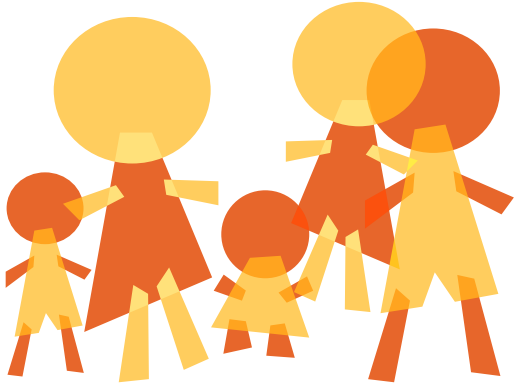

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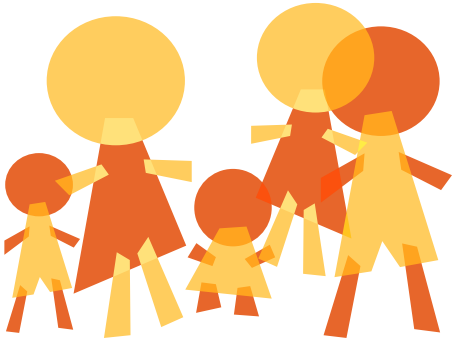
Table for Q4

Question	On my list? ✓ or ✗	Order 1-11	Class order
Is it compulsory?			
Who uses Census information?			
How does the ABS make sure of my privacy?			
How secure is the eCensus?			
Is my information going to be provided to other government agencies such as Centrelink, Tax Office or Department of Housing?			
Why is the Census needed?			
What are the benefits of having a Census?			
How are the Census results used?			
What is the eCensus?			
What is the Census?			
Who is counted in the Census?			

Sentences for Q5: Cut out the sentences, match them with the appropriate question in the table and then write the question's number in the box.

☐ The Census is **crucial** to communities, private institutions and all levels of government for the planning of **services and facilities**. **Federal funding** arrangements to the states and territories are also based on Census figures. Census information is used as the basis for the **allocation** of **GST revenue** to the **states and territories**.



Q5: Continued

- to **estimate** the population of each state, territory and local government area.
- to determine **electoral boundaries** and calculate the number of **Members** to be elected to the **House of Representatives** from each state and self-governing territory.
- to determine the **distribution** of Federal government funds to the states.
- to show **characteristics** of Australia's people and their housing within small geographic areas and for small population groups.
- to give governments and other users information they can use to support planning, administration, **policy** development and evaluation activities.
- to help plan basic services such as housing, social security, transport, education, industry, shops and hospitals.

No! The ABS is legally bound to protect the privacy of individuals and cannot give identifiable information to any **third party**. Organisations outside the ABS will not be given data about an individual person or individual household. The **confidentiality** of your data is protected by the Census and Statistics Act and the Privacy Act. Both these Acts ensure that data is not provided to anyone where that data can be used to identify an individual. All ABS staff, including temporary employees are legally bound never to release personal information outside the ABS. By law, organisations such as the Tax Office and credit reference groups cannot have access to personal details from the Census

The **eCensus** is an electronic option for returning your Census form, which allows you to complete the Census via the Internet.

The Census includes all people, except **foreign diplomats** and their families, who are in Australia and its internal and external Territories on Census Night. This includes:

- People working or living on boats in Australian waters.
- Visitors to Australia regardless of how long they've been in the country or how long they plan to stay.
- People normally resident in Australia who are on oil and gas rigs off the Australian coast.
- People of the Torres Strait Islands.
- People of the Territories of Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Christmas Island (the results for these Territories were included in the counts for Australia for the first time in 1996).
- People "over-wintering" in the Australian Antarctic Territory.
- Overseas visitors to Australia.
- Homeless people.
- People on aeroplanes travelling between Australian destinations on Census Night.
- People on ships travelling between Australian destinations on Census Night.
- All children, including newborn babies born before midnight on Census Night.
- People in detention centres.
- People in prison.
- Transport drivers on the road.
- People in hospitals and institutions.

Q5: *Continued*

- [ ] The ABS has an excellent record of maintaining the **privacy** and **confidentiality** of the information provided to it over 100 years of operations. All Census forms (including names and addresses) are **pulped** under strict supervision following processing.

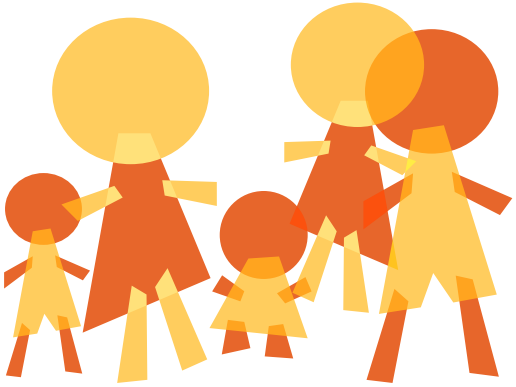
- [ ] The Census of Population and Housing is the largest statistical operation undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). It aims to accurately measure the number of people in Australia on Census Night, their **key characteristics** and the **dwellings** in which they live.

- [ ] Community organisations, private institutions and all levels of government use Census figures as the basis for many planning decisions, such as where to provide **services** for the **elderly** and young people.
  The number of seats each state and territory has in the **House of Representatives** is also based on Census figures, as are federal funding arrangements to the states and territories. Census information is used as the basis for allocation of **GST revenue** to the states and territories.

- [ ] To ensure that your information is delivered to the ABS free of **tampering**, we have used the strongest **encryption** technology that current **browsers** will support. eCensus data sent to the ABS via the Internet is not able to be read by anyone other than the ABS.
  At the end of the Census, the hard disk drives used to store information are thoroughly wiped under the supervision of the ABS to ensure there is no possibility of any Census data being accessed by any **unauthorised person**.

- [ ] Yes. The Census and Statistics Act (1905) which **authorises** the Census also provides for the **compulsory** completion of the Census form. On Census Night, you are asked to answer the questions on the Census form. If you do not answer the questions, the Australian Statistician has the power to direct you to provide the information.

- [ ] Census information is used by all sections of the community, from state and federal government to town planners, community groups, students, large and small businesses and more.



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Glossary of Census and related terms

ABS:	The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is the national agency responsible for developing and administering the Census.
Allocation:	sharing out
Authorises:	gives permission for, allows
Benefits:	advantages
Browsers:	software used to access information on the world wide web
Census:	a collection of information about everyone in a population. The Census of Population and Housing aims to measure the number of persons in Australia, their key characteristics, and their dwellings.
Census Night:	a night set aside for everyone to record their details on the Census form
Characteristics:	features
Compulsory:	must be completed
Confidentiality:	keeping information about a person secure and secret so that they cannot be identified
Crucial:	neccessary
Distribution:	sharing
Dwelling:	a building or structure in which people live including houses, flats, caravans, tents, humpies or park benches.
eCensus:	is a Census form that can be completed and returned via the Internet
Elderly:	older people
Electoral boundaries:	an area described in law that can elect one member to the federal, state or territory lower houses of parliament
Encryption:	scrambling information or putting it into code so that it cannot be read
Estimate:	a number based on available information
FAQ:	frequently asked questions
Federal funding:	money from the Australian government
Foreign diplomats:	public servants who represent other countries' governments but live in Australia
GST revenue:	money gathered by the government from the Goods and Services tax
House of Representatives:	one of the two houses of the Australian Federal Parliament—sometimes called the 'lower house'
Key characteristics:	main features
Members of Parliament:	people who are elected into the government
Policy:	plans and rules
Privacy:	keeping personal details private
Pulped:	crushed and mixed with water
Services and facilities:	necessary or useful items such as electricity, telephone connections, libraries and schools
States and territories:	Australia is divided into 6 states and 2 territories
Tampering:	changing without permission
Third party:	a person who is not directly involved in an event such as the Census
Unauthorised person:	a person who doesn't have permission to do something